

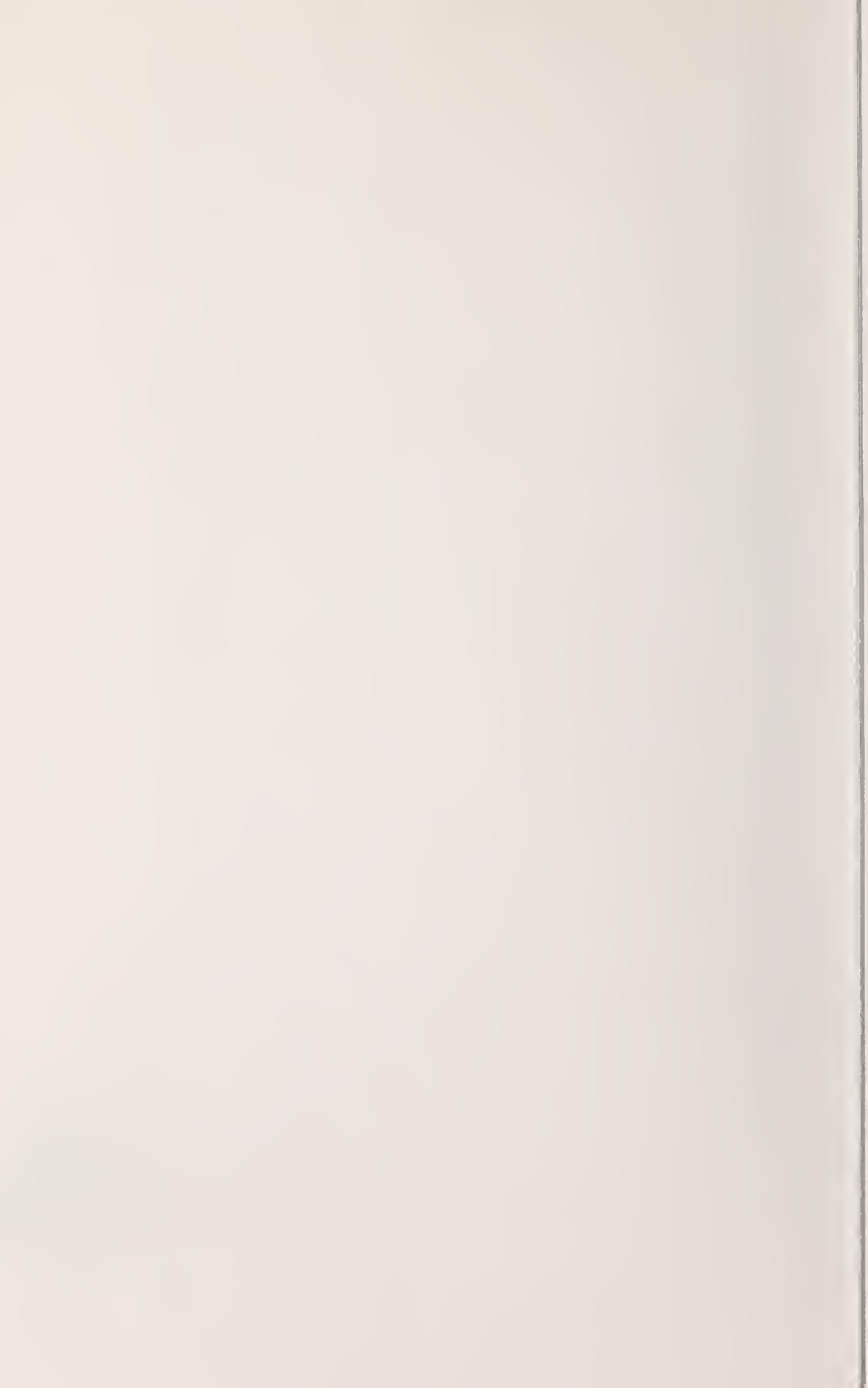




Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2016

<https://archive.org/details/calvertreview1969univ>









CALVERT REVIEW SPRING 1969

Spring 69

MARYLAND & RAKE BOOK ROOM  
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND LIBRARY  
COLLEGE PARK, MD.



COVER ART BY *D. E. WILLIAMS*



# CALVERT REVIEW SPRING 1969

Editor—Edwin A. Williams III, Editorial Staff—Stephen K. White, Lawrence Sandler, Jean A. Herring, Dennis Cloud, A. M. Stevens, Patricia E. Whitmore, George Avgerakis, Joel Arsenault. Technical Advisor—Mr. Paul E. Thomas, Faculty Advisor—Dr. Leonard Lutwack. The *Calvert Review* is published twice a year at the University of Maryland. Manuscripts and correspondence should be addressed to the *Calvert Review*, Room 46C Taliaferro Hall, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland, 20742. Opinions expressed or implied by contributors do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or of the publishers.

Copyright, 1969, by the  
*Calvert Review*, University of Maryland.  
Copyright reverts to authors upon publication.

Cover Stock: 90 lb. Sorg's Leather Embossed  
Inside Stock: Beckett Text Laid, White  
Typefaces: 10 & 11 Point Press Roman (IBM Selectric)  
Heads: 18 pt. Garamond Bold

Printed by Jones Composition Co., Bladensburg, Maryland

---

---

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

### PROSE

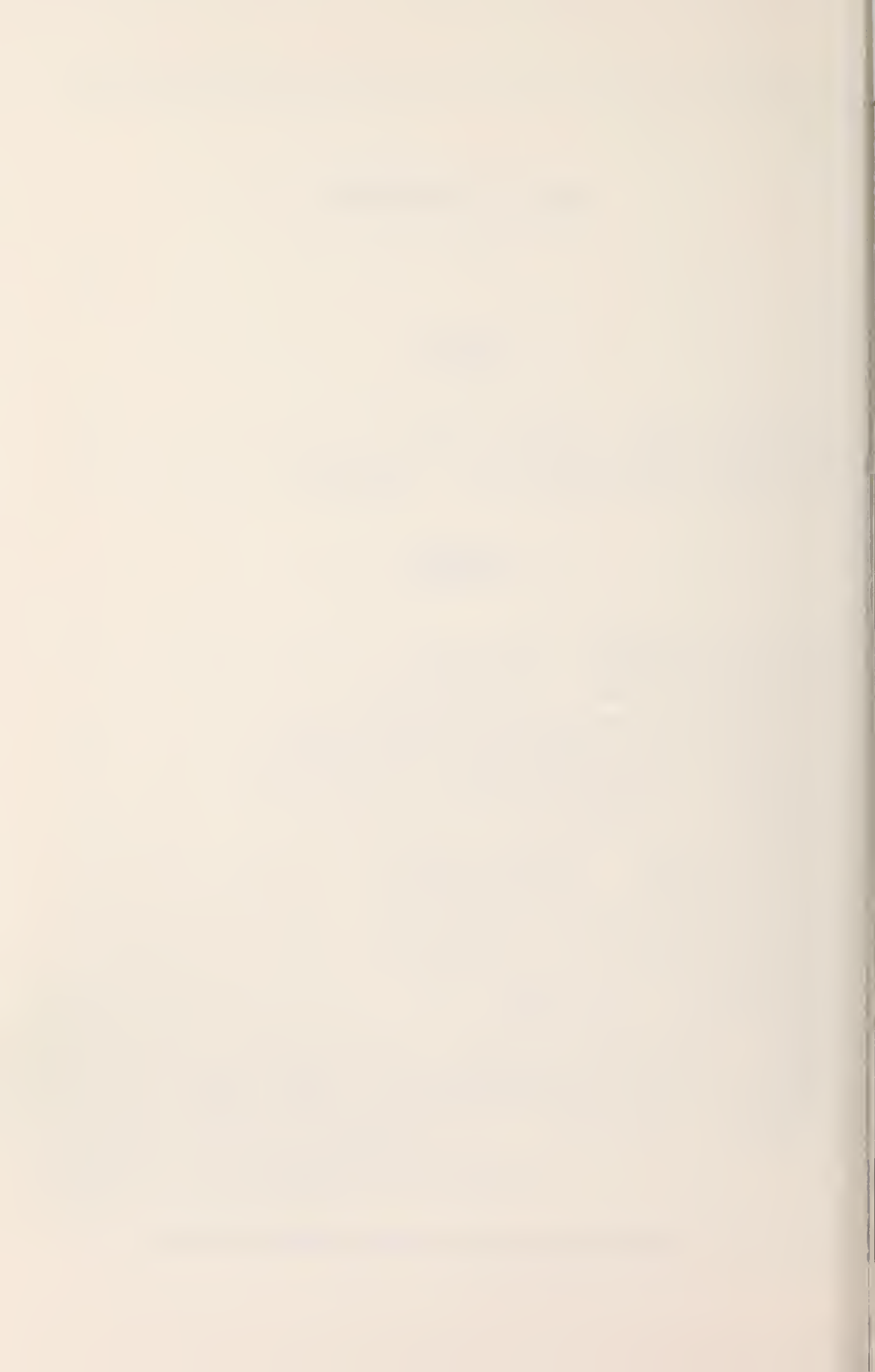
A TRIP OUT OF TOWN . . . <i>Douglas L. Davidson</i> .....	13
THE CROW . . . <i>Beatrice Greene</i> .....	27
THE CONSOLATION OF PHILOSOPHY . . . <i>Carolyn Banks</i> .....	41

### POETRY

UNTITLED . . . <i>Pat Rawlings</i> .....	5
THE DRIVE POSTPONED . . . <i>Linda Erlanger</i> .....	6
RAG CHILD IN THE PARK . . . <i>Charles Hornstein</i> .....	8
UNTITLED . . . <i>Joel Arsenault</i> .....	9
FALLEN RAFTERS . . . <i>Linda Erlanger</i> .....	10
UNTITLED . . . <i>F. G. Anderson</i> .....	12
CASUS BELLI . . . <i>Robert S. Zelenka</i> .....	21
COMPOST . . . <i>Lyn E. McGuire</i> .....	22
A UNITY OF TOUCH . . . <i>Julia Larson Douglass</i> .....	23
ALL THE WAY HOME . . . <i>Primus St. John</i> .....	24
THANK YOU MR. COLLINS . . . <i>Carollyn James</i> .....	26
THE EAST LAKE PLURALITY . . . <i>John C. Wilcox</i> .....	38
ONE FROM THE WARS . . . <i>Charles Hornstein</i> .....	39
THE BETRAYED . . . <i>Linda Erlanger</i> .....	40
ADAM . . . <i>Edward S. Gold</i> .....	42
HOMMAGE À DIETRICH BUXTEHUDE . . . <i>Robert S. Zelenka</i> .....	43
"DEOR" — A Translation From the Anglo-Saxon . . . <i>Patrick W. Conner</i> .....	44
UNTITLED . . . <i>Joel Arsenault</i> .....	47

---

---



We want ourselves to fall out of our labors  
Like apples out of the bushels  
At the end of a long day  
Of apple picking and sweat.

We want truth like that.

Something we can  
Bite into or suck on.  
A real of red.

What expresses us.  
It has our touch, our toothmarks,  
And our choice.

It has us. Bending not over a dream  
But a rock in a stream,  
Trout's heart.

Or a shock of summer lightning and our start  
Is truth enough. Or the yard in dustiness,  
Making no sense but to us.

*—Pat Rawlings*

---

---

## *THE DRIVE POSTPONED*

Take the green light while  
it glistens  
don't wait for me.  
I linger on a longer light,  
cling to the backs of white  
sloping fences, to linking  
past and present post upon  
post where they lie  
in the warm flesh of curving  
country roads and rock them—  
selves to sleep in the winds  
of the back woods;

where, in a farmer's way  
I build rock piles to dam  
the highway's rushing current  
before it can sweep me, posts  
and all,  
past the green sound  
into the whirling sound

---

over the rocky falls and  
down;  
better to hold the wheel  
to the fence than face the lapse  
of the green sound.

But you now you who will  
not be held  
who strains from the notches of  
posts since past to meet  
with the rapids' pull,  
to follow down the  
spinning dream  
my fence cannot retain  
take the green light  
while it glistens  
don't wait for me  
beneath this light waving  
cotton cloth  
my veins beat  
halting red.

—*Linda Erlanger*

## *Rag Child in the Park (Oct. 1965)*

Son of Kings  
the rag child in the park  
a solitary shadow  
gravel conceived; molded in cold fire  
caught between earth and sky  
dreaming of steak while sipping pepsis  
and eating moon-pies.  
Bathing in the blood bold cold drooling smiles  
of children that play in the fountain,  
splash silver pennies at his feet  
leaving him the empty pigeon trough  
to launch his splintered ships  
Crushed the flowers to cradle weeds  
and waited for a someday that would oneday come.

—Charles Hornstein



The Public Works truck has arrived  
to chase the moon out of the trees  
and stop the stars from climbing city gates.  
she said the stars are made of wax  
and it was only the blood of the elephant grass  
that ran the river red.

you see

we had nothing to lose in the first place.  
So let's use kitchen matches  
and go together to count the planks  
on the roof.

After that we can thread the birds'  
abandoned workshops with strips  
of October newspaper.

For the hounds have betrayed the last couple  
left

a pair of summer stones  
under a summer cliff.

—Joel Arsenault

# *FALLEN RAFTERS*

## I

At sixteen I am  
running downhill  
forty-two steps from our house  
to the mailbox  
echoing into that emptiness  
and singing  
no news is good news  
we will stay  
    awhile longer.

Father cannot walk  
steps anymore;  
sleeps in the sunroom on his couch  
watches the face of the full moon  
at night  
alone from the unshaded windows  
and checks the fluorescent hands  
of a clock for the time,  
the last time

I have wrapped my fingers  
around his wrists;  
they are so thin  
my fingers touch.

## II

At seventeen I am  
climbing uphill  
to a broken house with  
shattered windows in the sunroom;  
and a speechless clock  
someone stopped winding  
    ages ago.

Upstairs my old room  
lies empty and waiting;  
from up here I can see down the hill,  
I can see from here  
the ghost of a mailman  
bringing news

### III

We live better now, some of us  
in a house with  
no steps  
for no reason.

And Father lives  
in Florida because  
its warmer there  
and because, like birds  
gone south for the winter,  
he's been replaced by  
mocking birds  
singing every song  
but their own.

And mother keeps  
a backyard menagerie  
of tiny houses filled  
with sunflower seeds and singing,  
while Father feeds on nurses' food  
growing thinner,  
bending down low when I speak to him  
like the sunflower outside  
my window;  
bending and nodding to the sounds  
of the dark and the silence

—Linda Erlanger

High in the snow-clad forest, where an icy moon  
Strikes sharp spear-pointed shadows from the pines,  
The wolf, a weary hunter, seeks his home  
And finds it in the sleep that stills  
A desperate heart forever.

Bitter the snow, bitter the winter wind,  
Bitter the hunger cry that rose and fell,  
Itself like wind-swept snow, so cold, so aimless,  
Drifting downward, drifting outward,  
Toward the sunlit silent land.

Here on the plain one tree, deep-rooted in the sand,  
Draws up its life from some forgotten lake.  
Sweet are these waters, sweet the summer sun,  
And sweet to our dim eyes the dancing leaves  
That shimmer in the light.

But they, though deaf, have heard a soundless cry.

—*F. G. Anderson*

## *A Trip Out of Town*

—Douglas L. Davidson

He rubbed the dust off his hand and took his stance, glancing toward the runner on first. He stepped off the mound, took off his cap and wiped the sweat off his brow. This was an important pitch. Two outs, full count on the batter, last of the ninth, and the runner on first could tie the score. The crowds in the stands were tense. He stepped back to the mound, took a short wind-up and threw. The tennis ball struck the brick on the wall and bounded back, a line drive, straight to his glove. He'd done it! They'd won! The crowds went wild.

"Jimmy, Jimmy." His mother stood on the wooden porch of the gray apartment house and called to him. "Come in here, please, your father has something to tell you."

Jimmy pushed his cap back on his brow and ran up the porch steps and into the front room. Jimmy's father was seated on the couch, his elbows on his knees, his hands clasped in front of him, his head bowed. As Jimmy entered, he looked up and said, "You'd better sit down." Jimmy sat. "Jimmy, I'm afraid we're going to have to go to Dothan tonight. Your Uncle Jonathan has died."

Jimmy's heart beat faster. "How did he die, Daddy?"

"It was a heart attack. Someone found him in the bathroom this morning. Your Aunt Sarah has been so busy and upset, that she just now has been able to call us." He paused and leaned back against the back of the couch. "We'll be there at least a day or so, and I doubt if there will be anybody there that is near your age. You might take something to read, or a puzzle or something; so go ahead and find the things you want to take with you. And Jimmy—do it now. We'll be leaving just as soon as your mother finishes packing our clothes."

Jimmy got up and began walking to his room, half expecting his father to stop him and add something else, but his father remained seated on the couch, silent and motionless.

Jimmy closed the door to his room and turned about to look out the window at the growing dusk. "Uncle Jonathan is dead," he whispered. The clock ticking and the crickets outside the window were the only answering sounds he heard. He pulled off his baseball glove and laid it on the bed.

As they pulled away from the filling station, Jimmy sat in the back seat of the car, shivering slightly, though it wasn't cool. His parents were discussing routes to Dothan, and Jimmy felt very small and unimportant. He looked out the back window and across the intersection at another filling station which was deserted. The gas pumps sat isolated from the rest of the station and a large sliding door was pulled shut, hiding the garage

bed. Nothing moved except a small tree on the corner bending back and forth as the wind swept through its branches.

They had passed beyond the city limits, and Jimmy's parents were no longer talking. It was about a three hour ride to Dothan. After a few minutes of silence, Jimmy's mother made herself comfortable in the seat and shut her eyes. Jimmy sat on the edge of the seat, his arms draped over the back of the front seat. The back seat of the car did not fit very well in place, and each time the car hit a bump in the road, the seat gave a little lurch, threatening to become disattached. Coming home from the movies late at night, Jimmy found this lurching movement comforting. It was familiar. But tonight, on the strange road, Jimmy wished the seat would be still. His father seemed particularly attentive to the behavior of the car. As he drove, he was bent slightly over the wheel, and he seemed to be listening for something. Sitting tensed on the edge of the seat, Jimmy's feet began to get cold. The telephone poles loomed up quickly in the headlights, then vanished behind them. Jimmy's father remained silent, bent slightly over the wheel. Jimmy's mother was now asleep.

"You want me to wake Mama up so she can listen too, Daddy?" Jimmy asked from the back seat.

His father glanced back at him and smiled. "No, let her sleep," he said, straightening up in the seat, "I think we're going to be all right now."

Jimmy felt much better now, and as he looked back out at the telephone poles, he saw the white face of a cow lit briefly by the headlights. Squinting out at the fields by the road, he could see an entire herd of cows, most of them lying on the grass with their legs folded underneath them. Turning around to look out the back window, he could see a small but bright moon that cast a faint light on the road behind them. Picking out a telephone pole, Jimmy watched it recede in the distance, finally obscured by a rising hill. Thinking of white faced cows and telephone poles lit by the moonlight, Jimmy lay down in the back seat. Soon he was asleep.

The cow jumped over the telephone pole, but caught on the wire in the moonlight—"should wake him. . . might. . ." did a big flip, landed just right, and sank in the grass to its knees. . . "a ways further. . . better. . ." then came a tank, rolling and halting, bumping and stopping, and then with a grind went away—" . . sleep through anything. . . told you. . ." went away, went away. Another cow came and walked to the wire, but the pole went running away, the cow sand down, not in grass, but in water, cold and gray—" . . window up. . . shivering. . ." cool and blue, cool lake pond, like a trout with fin, out of water, hard to breathe, flip back over again-again-again.

"Jimmy. Jimmy. Jimmy, wake up, we're here. Time to get out now."

Jimmy opened his eyes and saw his mother standing outside the car looking in at him through the open car door. "Are you awake now?" Jimmy tried to say, "Yes, I'm awake now", but it all came out as a mumble. His mother laughed and straightened up. The trunk of the car slammed and his father stepped alongside the car carrying the two suitcases.

"Where're we going, Daddy?" Jimmy sat up on the seat and rubbed his eyes.

"We're going in now, Jimmy. This is your Aunt Sarah's house." Jimmy stared at his father blankly. His father got a little impatient, "We're in Dothan. This is where we're going to stay while we're here, now come on out so we can go in together."

Jimmy scrambled out of the car and grasped his mother's hand tightly. She smoothed his hair down and kissed him on the forehead.



The wind was blowing strongly and constantly. An occasional flash of lightning intensified the darkness. A long brick walkway with a slightly convex surface stretched away to a house some forty feet distant. The limbs of oak trees creaked overhead as a strong gust of wind tore through the branches. Rain began to patter against the trees, and Jimmy and his parents walked rapidly up the path toward the two story brick house. They ran the last few feet to the safety of the porch as the patter of separate raindrops mounted to a steady roar.

The door opened. An elderly woman with gray hair stood with her arms outstretched. Jimmy's father walked into her open arms and embraced her, and then the woman drew back a little to look at Jimmy and his mother standing on the porch. She spoke, "I'm so glad you could make it, Randy, and your wife and Jimmy."

"Jimmy," his father said, "come here and give your Aunt Sarah a hug."

Jimmy walked forward and was embraced as his father had been. Then Aunt Sarah hugged Jimmy's mother and hustled them all inside the door, where she walked several steps up a staircase in front of them and called out, "Sandy. Are you up there? Come here; I want you to meet someone."

A light brown, tousled head appeared over the banister, peering down at them curiously. Then the head disappeared and a few seconds later a girl of about eighteen stood at the head of the stairs; she was tightening the sash to her bathrobe. "Sandy, this is my brother, Randy, his wife, Mrs. Stevens, and their little boy, Jimmy." Then Aunt Sarah turned to face the Stevens family at the foot of the stairs. "This is Sandy." After everyone had said hello, a moment of silence followed. Aunt Sarah walked down the few steps and took her brother by the hand. "Randy, if you don't mind, I'll let Sandy show you where your room is. There's about half a dozen visitors in the study just now, and I'm the only one here in the family. Will you be all right?"

"Of course we will, Sarah, you go right ahead; Mother and I will be down just as soon as we wash up a little bit."

Aunt Sarah turned to go, then stopped. "If Jimmy isn't quite ready for bed, Sandy and a friend are watching television; he could watch television with them." Letting go her brother's hand, Sarah walked over to Jimmy and bent over a little, "Would you like to go to bed, Jimmy, or would you rather watch television for a while in Sandy's room?"

Jimmy glanced at his Mother, who was nodding her head up and down, smiling at Jimmy. "I think I'd rather watch television for a while." Aunt Sarah straightened up and smiled at Jimmy's mother, "Well, that's pretty well settled, isn't it?" Then she looked up the staircase at Sandy.

"Sandy, would you show them where their room is, and where they can wash up. As soon as Jimmy cleans up, he's going to watch television with you for awhile, so be sure to show him where your room is." Aunt Sarah turned to her brother a final time. "Hurry on down as soon as you can. People are coming and going all the time, and I'd like you and your wife to meet as many of them as you can. Some of them won't be able to attend the funeral." Jimmy's father reassured her that they would only be a minute, and Aunt Sarah kissed him on the cheek and hurried back into the study.

At the top of the stairs Sandy pointed to their room and the bathroom, close by. "Your room," Sandy apologized, "is the back porch. With all the people in the house, it's all there is left. But the screen is good, and the porch has awnings, so I don't think you'll get wet." She excused herself, "If there is anything at all you need, or if you can't find something, just hollar." She pointed, "That's my room right down the hall."

After his parents had finished in the bathroom, and Jimmy had taken his bath, he stood by the edge of his bed uncertainly. His parents had already gone downstairs. He walked out into the hall and looked toward Sandy's room. The door was closed. He tiptoed to the edge of the stairs and peered down to the vestibule below. Suddenly the door to Sandy's room opened, and Sandy's tousled head appeared in the doorway. "Oh, there you are. I thought you'd got lost. Come on in, you're going to miss a good program if you don't hurry." Jimmy hesitated. In her bare feet and pajamas, she walked quickly to the banister, watching the stairs as she did so. "I'd be killed if I were caught out here without a bathrobe." Jimmy supposed she was talking to him. He looked down the stairs with her. Then she took him by the hand, and smoothing his hair, she led him to her room. Inside, she let go of his hand and shut the door, leaning against it and saying melodramatically, "Safe." Then with a little jump, she landed in the middle of her bed.

Jimmy sat down on a small stool and fixed his eyes on the television set. He could see Sandy sitting cross-legged on the bed smiling at him. "Jimmy," she said softly. Jimmy, his ears turning red, pretended not to hear. "Jimmy," she said again. Jimmy moved his head slightly to look at her. "I'm sorry if I embarrassed you, Jimmy."

Jimmy waited for her to continue, but she stopped. Before he realized it, Jimmy said, "That's all right."

Sandy looked toward a girl with dark black hair, seated in a chair by the door, her hands folded in her lap. "Jimmy," Sandy continued, "this is Elaine." and then looking back at Jimmy, "and, Elaine, this is Jimmy." Then in a more lively tone, pointing to the television, "This is the most amazing quiz program. See that little boy? He's a genius when it comes to calendars. Listen, there he goes again—"

Jimmy listened while the boy gave the exact date of an eclipse of the sun in some obscure century. The questions grew harder and harder, but the boy answered all the questions in a conversational tone, completely at ease. During a commercial, Sandy started talking to Elaine. Jimmy slid off the stool and onto the rug.

The room was brightly lit, casually messed up, knick-knacks and girl objects laying about in profusion. In the air there was a pleasant odor of perfume, light and tantalizing. Jimmy noticed for the first time, a small window above and behind the television set. As he was staring at the four darkened squares of the window, suddenly they lit up brightly and there was a tremendous crash. Jimmy lay frozen in position, his chin resting in his hands; Sandy and Elaine screamed simultaneously. Dazed, Jimmy turned his head to look in their direction. Sandy gave a little laugh of relief and reached out her hand to grasp Elaine's hand which was also stretched out to Sandy. Sandy put her other hand over her heart, "Thank goodness! I'd forgotten it was storming outside. I hope the lightning didn't hit any of the oaks in the yard. They're so beautiful and old; if the lightning hits them just right, it can kill the whole tree."

Flashes of light and low rumbles now came at regular intervals. Jimmy rose and went to the window where he pressed his nose against the window pane. "Jimmy," Sandy shrieked, "come away from that window!" Then a great flash lit up the front yard, and Jimmy jumped back from the window. He pressed his nose back against the pane of glass. After several more flashes, Jimmy turned around and looked at Sandy.

"The oak trees are all right except for a lot of little branches. No real big ones though." Motionless, Sandy looked at Jimmy from the bed. Then she scrambled from the bed and hugged Jimmy as he stood by the window.

The next half hour passed quickly for Jimmy, who felt quite at home sprawled carelessly on the rug watching television. Someone knocked at the door; it was Jimmy's



mother, and she announced firmly, despite pleas from Sandy, that it was time for Jimmy to go to bed. Jimmy knew his mother well, the way she lingered at doorways over her farewells, so he didn't move from the rug until she called him a second time. At her second call, he rose quickly and grabbing her by the hand, tugged her out the door. When he was sure that she was too far outside the room to re-enter, Jimmy edged about her to say good night to Sandy and Elaine. The last thing Jimmy heard as the door closed was Sandy saying, "Good night, Jimmy."

Outside in the hallway, walking to their room, Jimmy's mother put her arm about Jimmy's shoulders and smoothed his hair absently. This irritated Jimmy, and more to break the silence than for information, he asked, "Where is Daddy?"

"He's downstairs in the study; he'll be up in a minute." They had reached the room, and even as she said this, a voice broke away from the murmuring in the study below and grew more distinct. Looking down the stairs, Jimmy saw his father standing with his back to him, in the doorway of the study. He was saying good night to someone. As Jimmy watched, his father turned about and began climbing the stairs. Jimmy's mother opened the door and gently pushed Jimmy inside their room on the porch. "You go right on to bed now, whether you're sleepy or not." She closed the door as Jimmy cut on the light, and as Jimmy undressed and got into bed, he could hear his parents talking softly in the hallway outside. He closed his eyes and smiled a contented smile.

Suddenly the porch shook with a violent burst of wind. Jimmy sat up in bed. The door opened and his father entered, he cut on the light. His father ruffled his hair, "You did that so well, Jimmy, I think I'll let you cut the light off when we get ready for bed." The door separated Jimmy's bed from the beds his parents would be sleeping in. His father undressed and got in the bed closest to Jimmy; his mother got in the other. "O.K., Jimmy," his father called, "you can cut the light out now." Jimmy reached over his head and flicked the light switch on the wall over his bed.

As his eyes grew accustomed to the dark, Jimmy could make out the vague outlines of oak trees in the back yard, swaying perceptibly. After only a few minutes, Jimmy heard his father's light, familiar snore. His mother sighed, between sleep and wakefulness. Her breathing slowly steadied and deepened. Jimmy moved his feet about to find the cooler portions of the sheet. Half-asleep, he thought that he was smiling. When he was certain that he was smiling, he started to laugh. Somewhere in the midst of his laughter he went to sleep.

Someone was shaking him by the shoulder. He rolled over to his back and looked up at his mother. She was talking. "...so late last night, but you missed breakfast. Are you hungry?"

It was blurred. "Hungry?" he mumbled.

"Yes. Are you hungry?"

"No'm."

"Hop up now and get dressed. I've laid your clothes on the bed over there. I'm going back downstairs; we've got some more visitors this morning, and your Daddy wants me down there. So hop out right now, I want to make sure you don't go back to sleep like you usually do."

"O.K. I'm up." Jimmy threw back the covers and dropped his feet to the floor. His mother kissed him on the forehead and went out the door, closing it behind her.

Jimmy laid back down on the bed and pulled the covers over his head. After several minutes he threw the covers back again, and rose to get dressed, looking out the screen at

the lawn. Small tree limbs were scattered everywhere, half buried in green leaves glistening with dampness. As Jimmy walked down the stairs, he met his mother coming up. When he reached her, she took his hand and rushed him down the few remaining steps to the vestibule below.

She took a deep breath, "Your uncle is lying in state,—"

"What? He's what?"

"He's lying in state. The undertakers—the people who take care of people who have passed away—the undertakers have dressed your uncle in one of his best suits, and—" His mother paused, then she began again, gripping his hand tightly and giving it a little shake. People were beginning to move slowly out toward the vestibule. Aunt Sarah was in front. "Your uncle looks just like he did when he was alive, and now, before the funeral, all the close friends and relatives will have a chance to see your uncle again."

"Mother."

"What, Jimmy," his mother answered, glancing at him and then looking back at Aunt Sarah whom she was watching closely now.

"Mother, can I stay here?" His mother just glanced at him, squeezing his hand once more. Aunt Sarah was coming toward them slowly, talking with someone as she approached. Jimmy tugged at her hand. "Mother, I don't want to go. Mother! I don't want to go!"

His mother relaxed her pressure on his hand. Surprised, she bent down beside him. Jimmy backed away. Aunt Sarah laid her hand on Jimmy's shoulder. Jimmy's mother stood up. "What am I going to do? Jimmy doesn't want to go." Aunt Sarah turned Jimmy around so he was facing her. She lifted his chin so that Jimmy was looking in her eyes. "Jimmy," she said, "I think I know how you feel. Don't worry about it, it's all right."

Jimmy's mother crouched down beside him, "Now listen, Jimmy, if you stay here, you'll have to stay inside. I don't want you going outside and getting dirty. Did you bring anything to read?"

"Yes ma'm."

"Well then, you read till we get back. Stay put so we won't have any trouble finding you. We shouldn't be too long."

Aunt Sarah was talking to someone. Jimmy turned and went upstairs. On the porch he sat down on his bed and remembered that he had left his comic books in the car. Downstairs it was growing quieter; he could hear cars starting. Someone outside spoke loudly, but he couldn't tell what he was saying. Then he didn't hear anymore cars. It was very quiet. He opened the door and walked to the head of the stairs and looked down. He didn't see anybody. From somewhere he heard faint music; it was coming from Sandy's room, but the door was shut. He went back onto the porch and laid down on his bed, leaving the door open so he could hear the music. He must have dozed off, because he thought he felt something soft on his forehead, but when he opened his eyes, the door was shut. It was very quiet, and he would have been afraid, but there was a light and very pleasant odor of perfume in the air.

His mother woke him, pulling him off the bed and scolding him while she brushed at the wrinkles in his pants. She led him, yawning, out of the house; on the brick walkway, Jimmy hung back. He thought he was forgetting something. In the black limousine, seated by the window, Jimmy remembered the faint perfume.

"Mother."

"What?"

"Where's Sandy? Is she going to the funeral?"

"I don't know, son. Shh." His mother looked at the elderly lady seated beside her in the car. "Sandy seems like such a nice girl. I didn't see her downstairs at all. Is she well?"

"She's well," the elderly lady said briefly. Her wrinkled hands played about the pocketbook in her lap. "And people are going to talk." She opened the snap on her pocketbook then shut it. "Both her parents were the very dearest and closest friends of Sarah's. When they were killed, Sarah didn't hesitate to take her in. Sarah has been like a godmother to her — never forced Sandra to anything." The elderly lady opened her purse again and withdrew a handkerchief. "I don't understand the child; I never have. Please, let's don't talk about it anymore." She wiped at her eyes with the handkerchief.

"I'm sorry," Jimmy's mother said softly, "I shouldn't have—"

"No. It's all right; you didn't know."

Jimmy closed his mouth and asked, "Mother, will Sandy be at the funeral?"

His mother grasped his arm tightly and shook him. "I want you to be quiet," she whispered, "I'll explain it to you, but not now. Later."

The auditorium of the church was huge. The ceiling was high overhead, and was supported by large wooden beams meeting in the center of the auditorium to form row after row of arches. The pews were also made of wood, without cushions and straightbacked. Jimmy and his family sat near the front of the church, and behind them, the seats were almost full. The ushers in dark suits moved hushed down the thick carpeted aisles leading people to unoccupied seats. All around Jimmy, there was a quiet murmur as people talked in whispers. Then the murmur increased and suddenly it was completely quiet. There wasn't a whisper; heads were turned, looking toward the rear of the church. Jimmy turned to look. In a light pink dress, halfway down the aisle, there was Sandy. Elaine was with her. Jimmy waved to them; Sandy saw him and waved back, smiling. They sat down close to the aisle, and the murmuring in the church resumed. Jimmy turned back around, and soon the service began.

When the pastor began to describe Uncle Jonathan, Jimmy began to cry. He went alive into the tomb of dreaded grief. In the dark, his hands touched the smooth, ungraspable walls; he tasted what he could not swallow; he saw the scent of what he could not smell. With a light head, Jimmy drifted up from where he had been, and he was surprised that nothing had changed. Here was his mother, and crying on his father's shoulder, there was Aunt Sarah. A few pews back, seated by the aisle, there sat Elaine, staring straight ahead. But where was Sandy? He would have asked his mother, but he remembered the pressure on his arm when he had asked her in the car. His mother took him by the hand, and her fingers each had a life of their own. She was nervous.

The flowers beneath the awning were beginning to wilt. The steel folding chairs sat crooked on the soft ground, and the voice that spoke of ashes and dust was flaked and weary. The wind stirred the loose soil about the edges of the open grave.

As his mother pulled him away, Jimmy looked back and saw the dull blades moving, and he heard the shovelfuls of dirt as they thumped against the coffin that held Uncle Jonathan. Jimmy couldn't imagine Uncle Jonathan without crinkles at the corners of his eyes. The crinkles were always there when Uncle Johnathan laughed. From somewhere in the crowd, Jimmy heard someone say, "Sandy." He pulled at his Mother's hand, stopping her and looking up at her. She looked down at him quickly, then picked

him up and pressed his head against her bosom. He was too big to be carried, and he struggled to be set free, but walking rapidly, she pressed him to her even more tightly. He quit struggling and allowed himself to be carried.

His mother took him back to Aunt Sarah's in a cab. When they arrived, she led him up the stairs, and standing by his bed, she told him to change clothes. Then she left, but while he was pulling on a short sleeved shirt, she reappeared.

Carefully she set a tray down on his bed. "Here, now eat this, and be sure you don't spill anything off the tray." While Jimmy ate, his mother packed the suitcases.

"Where's Daddy," Jimmy asked.

"He's downstairs saying goodbye to some people."

Finished eating, Jimmy sat the tray on the bed beside him. His mother picked it up and went out, shutting the door behind her. Jimmy opened the door and walked to the head of the stairs. He was standing there when his mother returned. She walked quickly up the stairs and took his hand, leading him back down the stairs. When they reached the brick walkway, and Jimmy saw their car parked out front, he realized they were leaving.

"Aren't we going to say goodbye to Aunt Sarah?"

"Your Aunt Sarah is very busy right now, Jimmy. But I saw her and she said for me to give you a big hug." She stopped and hugged him.

"Did you see Sandy," Jimmy asked.

His mother squeezed him again and they walked the few remaining steps to the car.

In a few minutes Jimmy's father appeared, walking down the brick pathway, carrying the two suitcases.

Jimmy turned about in the seat to watch the brick house depart in the distance. His knees near the edge of the seat dislodged it, and he tumbled to the floorboard of the car. "What in the world—" his mother turned around, looked at him and laughed.

"Have to get that fixed someday." His father grinned at him in the rear view mirror.

Jimmy inspected his ridiculous position and laughed. He loved the old car more than ever.

On the outskirts of the city, they stopped at a filling station with a drugstore nearby. Jimmy asked his father if he had said goodbye to Sandy. His father looked down at him, ruffled his hair and gave him a quarter to buy some comic books to read on the way back. His mother went in with him to buy a pocketbook from the circular rack that stood by the comic book stand.

Reaching the open country, the grass and trees were a bright green from the recent rain. The high, red clay banks along the sides of the road bore the signs of recent erosion. Sharp, torturous valleys ran down their steep slopes.

They arrived home late in the afternoon. Jimmy scrambled out of the back seat while his father opened the trunk of the car and removed the suitcases. In the front room, his father set the bags down on the floor and plopped down on the couch. "Whew! I never thought the old car would make it."

Jimmy's mother sat down beside his father on the couch. "I'm glad we're back; I was a little worried too."

Jimmy's father looked up at her from his prone position on the couch. "What? With me driving?"

In back of the house, Jimmy got on his bicycle. He rode until the roads were circular, and the houses were all two stories, made of brick. He stopped at a huge grass field that was centered among the houses. The field was well mowed, and it stretched



away before him like a shallow green bowl. Jimmy reached in his pocket and removed the small stone he had taken from his uncle's graveside. The stone was so round and smooth that it reminded Jimmy of a large opaque marble that he had found one day in the schoolyard. That afternoon when he had used it for the first time, the marble had split in half. Drawing his arm back, he threw with all his strength toward the center of the green field. In the quietness, he murmured, "Rest in peace." Then he pedalled back home.

The last moments of the day found Jimmy out in front of the apartment house. He had a no hitter going when his mother called him for supper.

---

## *CASUS BELLI*

Pip, the seer, Melville's mad black boy,

Sing us a song of Saigon and Hanoi:

I kill, you kill, he kills;

We kill, ye kill, they kill.

Sufficient reason? War requires none.

Above stark fields relentless bombers drone.

—Robert S. Zelenka

---

## COMPOST

corn cobs  
tossed into the compost pit  
gradually to be buried in a  
sodden confetti of weed clumps  
leafy mulch  
and more slops from the kitchen

the daily evening trip to the pit  
was the chore  
done for Dad  
after dinner

toss chicken scraps  
scatter green peas  
flick shreds of lettuce

neighborhood kids called it  
a junk heap

Dad said  
someday we'll dig it up  
better fertilizer than manure

he died though  
so in summer  
we seeded-over the pit  
with blue morning glories

and amid the vines  
a few sturdy stalks  
bore us ears of corn

—Lyn E. McGuire

## *A UNITY OF TOUCH*

Then

I was always willing  
to accept your strange world's  
angry buddha calling:  
screaming fire-songs  
into Salt Lake City's arid summer air  
or sitting peyote-eyed among  
the ending canyons,  
elevating a leaf to trinity  
or unity.

Could you have touched me  
from that mad country  
and let me know with you?

Now

The railroad's tracks  
hum sadly in your nightmares,  
sweat, like beaded glycerine,  
is oil for the engines of the mind  
steaming into wild countries.

I would call you home  
into my quiet hands and  
rub your freckled back and say:

“It is all right.”

And have that be true.

—*Julia Larsen Douglass*

---

---

## *ALL THE WAY HOME*

The lamps hung like a lynching  
In my town.  
In a dark town,  
Light is a ragged scar.  
Fright begs that ragged scar.  
It begs doorways.

I love that town.  
From its lean men  
I learned  
Emotion;  
And how to hold that fine edge,  
That makes us  
people. . .

Mrs. Blackwell's  
Sold her house.  
Since her husband revolved his head,  
She wears bright hats  
That speak to people.



---

B.J.'s doing time.  
His children betray that time,  
By the breathing it takes  
To dream through windows.  
Mary Lee dreams him letters;  
She dreams by heart. . .

Now I feel a new scar.  
I've left home  
And leaned so far,  
I'm almost zero.  
And though it's lonely  
Whatever knowing is;  
It strings a long fine wire.  
At night I lie awake  
And listen to that wire—

All the way home.

—*Primus St. John*

## *Thank You, Mr. Collins*

### I.

“And when we were children, staying at the arch-duke’s”

the houses were bigger.

and,

the summers were longer.

and,

the desserts were better.

and,

my best friend had one eye and the dog had chewed her arms.

and,

“And down we went.

In the mountains, there you feel free.”

### II.

and there’s a breath in west virginia

who fills ballons and dusts corners and dries tears

and there’s a very early morning in west virginia

who stretches when she hears him playing the harmonica

and there’s a mist in west virginia

who i put inside my pocket,

and brought home with me.

“to keep a little smoke

between myself

and the world”

—Carollyn James

# THE CROW

—Beatrice Greene

The old road and the new road weren't separate roads at all, only the upper and lower halves of Arden Farms Road. In the middle was Arden Farms—not a farm but a subdivision—laid out to either side of Arden Farms Lane, a short stubby finger of asphalt stuck out from the crest of the arc of Arden Farms Road. The lower road had been improved when the houses of Valley Heights went up, its exuberance of curve pared down, kinks and snaky loopings restrained and smoothed, a thin white banner of sidewalk capping all unfurled along its freshly marcelled edgeline.

For Arden Farms, the whole affair of the new road had been pretty much a trauma. One day, mysteriously out of nowhere, all that machinery had appeared and levelled the cliff right down, going at it doggedly lumbering, persevering. By the time anyone had discovered the direction of the racket and found the proper window from which to observe, the cliff had been half sheered away and lay in piles of red clay along the road edge—at this point in the development still unimproved—waiting to be carted off in an all-day operation of truckload after noisy truckload. Finally they all had to close their windows, even though it was summer, against the dust which came and settled in thick ochre layers over everything.

It might have been Gloria Reid who had perhaps noticed first, mothering her ten o'clock coffee, letting herself solicitously down into Ann's diaperslung green canvas patio chair. "I don't know—" she monitored a stream of coffee overflow back from saucer to cup, "I don't know," she worried, "those houses seem to be going up close—right close." And later, as the shaping of the new neighborhood had grown appallingly more plain, Hazel Smith was more outspoken. "It is obscene," she had said, "positively obscene to build anything as close together as that." The new houses, unlike the homes of Arden Farms, made not even a pretense at eye-averted arm's length, but stared brazenly eyeball to eyeball, threatening impendently a public lapse sidelong into one another's arms, like teenage lovers in bluejeans and miniskirts locked together in the movies on Friday nights.

It was Dina Weyman, brooding into the uni-layer parquetry of Valley Heights, who, as she so often did, best articulated the concern of them all. "You know how it is," she confided in her tender way—there was a pervading sweetness in the way Dina spoke; unlike lots of people, she was every bit as attractive on the inside as she looked on the outside—"when things don't look nice like that—" she hesitated in her kind way—"well, the first thing you know, you might get some people in there who are not so nice."

That was to the left. To the right of Arden Farms the road turned time asleep, secret wild and wandering, under thick-arched tree limbs close meshing from their opposite cliff banks.

Arden Farms was attached on both ends, like a sort of crinkled button loop, to North Central Avenue. And since its entire arc bellied for no longer than a mile or so, and since all destinations led perforce by way of North Central Avenue, for the residents of Arden Farms it was pretty much six of one or half a dozen of the other whether they chose to merge with the lava flow by way of the old road or the new.

Over the choice the Garlands experienced one of their rare family divisions. That the old road was one of the best features of the house, their favorite way, their snob way, the way they took or directed guests, both Garlands were substantially agreed. Nevertheless to go, as did Ann, only by way of the old road, Otis considered a kind of pampering— in a way a putting on. It disturbed a certain ruggedness, the normal, well-regulated confluence of feet with ground, his objective male exactitude for the practical necessities of things. Otis insisted on the bitter with the better. He pointed the nose of his little red Volkswagen accordingly— it was his firm, dispassionate practice— with obedient logic up or down Arden Farms Road, depending upon whether his goal was up or down North Central Avenue.

But Ann felt herself endowed by nature with a special entitlement of vagary of mood and choice. The commonness of Valley Heights on the one end and the traffic glut of North Central Avenue on the other, both of which had to be endured, constituted, so far as Ann was concerned, a sufficiency of disagreeableness. The brief stretch of old roadside, she insisted, sustained her. Be her destination up or down North Central Avenue, she would go no other way.

The morning of the crow the right front window of the station wagon was discovered collapsed in its furrow, sunk beyond resurrection, one corner lapsed lower than the other past the point where anybody's fingers could reach. And the handle that worked the window up or down only swung inanely around and around, obviously no longer attached to or controlling anything.

The earlier the better on the old road, everything still dewmoist, and Ann needed gas anyway. It was a superb morning, new spring, the sun shining bridally through thin green baby tender of leaves freshly unfurled. The wild cherry and black locust were still bare, guarding darkly— a gallery of Gothic kings— over steep yellow vaults of last year's fallen leaves. Only the other week congealed snowdoilies had held their ground deep in the tall shade cones where sunfingers never permeated, but it seemed to Ann peering up through opening dogwood that these were all gone now. Their disappearance was always the final sign that winter was over. The meltage had turned the road all puddley.

And then there it was— she would have seen it reflected in the running road rivers had she not at the moment happened to look up— low flying, just radiator height, not a hundred yards ahead, softly silhouetted in the misty morning milkglow— this crow, hovering before her in a long wavering suspension, angular, crooked-bent, black as lights extinguished, drooping sagging in that used-up, old smudged-rag way they do.

She wondered was it ill or hurt or something. It seemed to hang there broken, she wondered was she going to run it down, ought she to stop her car, going so slowly anyway as she always did, savoring the old road, for a crow sagging in mid-air, was it really not going to flap itself away?— Then it slipped her mind, it must have dipped from sight, perceived in tangent only, dropping away into void simultaneously with the impression erased. She passed the spot oblivious. — And then all the little feather curls of notice came swirling round the sides of her attention, seafoam past embedded rock, and fomented in a basin centered directly to the fore. *What had happened to the crow?* Had she ever actually seen it disappear? Her belly pitched and tumbled over— it seemed to her

she felt the thud— was it now, or was it now as she had felt it then? — the solid impact sweeping over her in a nauseous wave as insides spurted from the loose-slung pouch (it was astonishing how many insides things had in them, yards and yards of entrails dropping softly unlooping), a ragged feather cape flattened against the radiator grille, broken end points perforating, gradually inching, slipping down, in terminus rolled flat adherent, smooth-rolling wheels stamp pressing laminating to the roadbed, crushed yellow eyes slant evil open, golden syrup sweating, sluicing blood sop seeping, bloodwet feathermat dam overflowing ketchup over eggs.

Of course she hadn't run it down. It was instinct for them to get out of the way, wasn't it? Like blinking when someone stuck their hand in your face. The least she could do, turn back, turn back. It was an obligation. To leave it lying there. Come now, what lying where? Turn back, turn back, peel it from the asphalt, compact it in a dark and silent ditch. Remorse, compunction, absolution. What *were* the proper obsequies for a crow? It merited smiling at—almost.

Craven flesh shrinking desperate, outthrusting. And the gentlest spinster schoolteacher, overcome with remorse had she inadvertently crushed the green ooze from a caterpillar, teaching Hamlet indecisive, now the moment, stab him, kill him, muffs his chance. And balconied theatres-full breath holding, now's your chance, now, stab him, kill. Hamlet, the one sane man. A civil man. Turn back, turn back. Regret and absolution. Peel it, scrape it, lay it secret in a sheltered ditch. Of course she hadn't hit that crow. Turn back. Turn back and see.

Afraid. She kept right on. The sheer non-intelligence of acknowledging nonsense. Broom of common sense crisp sweeping to the rescue. Why inhabit a dark and medieval world when just a flick of the switch? And her gas tank Empty. And if it should be there— her insides lifted and pitched over once again— she squatting in her beige trenchcoat peeling, peeling and it never would come off. And if it did turn out to rain, ragged sleeves of cloud against the cobalt, there she'd be with no window and the car given up to ruination.

Something she felt happening in the depths of her awareness, growing, looming in still shapeless forms, which her surface mind just picked at nervously in a delicate braille palpation. She groped in a primordial, still pictureless vacuity; a dreadful image struggled to attain focus, a nucleus forming, formidable blossom of a humpbacked actuality. Everything seemed to be trying to tell her something awful. A frost cool breath advised her, distantly admonishing, lost calm dissolving as it formed against the heated current of her dread. Go back, go back to ease your mind. She went right on.

"Can't fix that here," the garage man said. He was a delicately made, fine-featured old man, his hair a greyish lichen round his scalp. "You window's gone clean off its track. Fall right down rattling round inside that door. Handle ain't turnin' nothin', see. Oney ways to fix that, take the inside panel off the door, set that window on its track again."

Pulling wide the right front door, he demonstrated to Ann what had to be done, pointing down to where the window had sunk and to the panel that needed to be removed in order to set it working again. He seemed all bent and angled, but he was not. It was just the way he felt the rhythm of his talk, down through his elbows and clear into his knees.

Yes, he knew a place where Ann could get it done. "Dentonstovn place. Glass place. Good place. Don't can't think that name at all. Place right down here in Dentons-town. Can't fix that name. Right down Route One, across the bridge aheadin' to you left,



across them railroad tracks and over to you left once more. A plumbing place next door That's right. You see that plumbing place, you know you are there."

Happened Ann knew just where he meant— a pocket of small industrial concerns taking turns on moulting streets with a scattered stringing of orphaned, disintegrating private houses, no more than shacks really. set in raggedy unkempt yards inside rows of rotting fences and lines of flapping purplish laundry— all dropped under the viaduct straddling the tracks of the B & O. She and Otis had bought the tile for their kitchen floor down in one of those shops a few years back. It had been by far the best price they could get anywhere.

"And right down off the bridge is this furniture place. Big place, with a big parking lot. Right off to your left," said Ann, remembering.

"That's right, that's right. Right off the bridge this furniture place. You going to find that place. Ain't have no trouble a-tall, a-tall. And next to that the motor tune-up place."

"And across the street a kind of drug supply place."

"That's right, that's right. Diagonal right across the street that drug store place. You know, you know just where it's at. Ain't have no trouble a-tall, a-tall."

They see-sawed back and forth. "Down a steep hill," chanted Ann, trying to be comforted, trying to rock herself loose from the fidgets.

"That hill sure steep. Street fall way down. Come right on down across them tracks."

"Grade school on the right."

"Grade school on the right, that's right. And right across the street that plumbing place." He bent and danced alongside the car in an overflow of joy. "You know that place. You find that place. You ain't have no trouble a-tall, a-tall."

And then the old man coughed, a catch of breath, not anything bad, not anything anywhere near the cough it seemed to Ann she heard and knew she was imagining right alongside the clean and inoffensive exhalation that the old man actually breathed. Solid as the thud of crow against the car she heard the percolating of an abominable spume, a phlegmy rattle starting somewhere down below his shoes, erupting foully, as if all the oozing messes of the earth converged and bubbled nastily together.

"What do I owe you?" Ann was abrupt. She rattled bills, clanked coins— anything to snap the chain.

She found the place all right. With just a *little* trouble. The streets zig-zagged and herringboned rather than squared off in rectangles— Otis had been driving the other time— and she made a few wrong turnings.

"Button's busted," said the man after one look. He was a freckle-splashed young man with gingery arms and thinning hair. He wore a fresh checked shirt still ridged in ironing folds and an impressively spotted pair of closely-fitting light grey chinos. On the appropriate finger there was a wedding band.

He worked the cover off a large steel box and rummaged around inside. "Now let's see if we have another one that fits."

There was a kind of suspense in it that took Ann out of herself. She followed him out of the sunlight into the shed. She always liked to watch a workman work. There was to her a wisdom in a workman's hands, a knowing capability which was a kind of goodness in itself.

*"No, this one won't fit  
And this one won't fit*

*And no, not this one neither;  
This one— guess not—  
And this one— maybe might fit,  
Let's try—"*

The man held a smallish ivory plastic knob. Ann followed him out into the sun that was beating down, and it was very beautiful the way his hands worked, delicately, sightlessly, with the help of a long, slender, crochet-hook-looking tool probing down beneath the panel.

It was all done in a moment, and in that moment there jumped into Ann's mind, clear and startling as a car looming, coming suddenly directly at you on your side of the road— this split-level colonial, just like the ones in Valley Heights. There were three steps going up and you were in the living room, and standing in the middle of the floor was this skinny girl in very clean white shorts with the same kind of wedding band on as the car window man only narrower. Her hair was by courtesy of Clairol— not recent courtesy either, for only the half of it was very, very blonde— the part that was cut short and shingled to a point against her neck, and the two little hair spirals that were pasted with scotch-tape, one by each earlobe, against her cheeks. The darkish part, the top, was done around on outsize rollers, some pink, some blue. Her nails had been considerably attended to— at one time— and it was evidently to repair the erosion that she stood there poised, her hands full of absorbent cotton puffs, Kleenex, and little vials of liquid, looking around at the two lounge chairs, one of which had yesterday's newspaper in layers on it, the other a child's navy blue sweater crushed up in a ball, trying to decide the best place to light.

There were two red pagoda-shaped lamps still in their cellophane wrappings suspended from the upflung arms of two naked, squatting Nubian girls with built-in ashtrays containing a scattering of coins and bus tokens where their laps ought to have been. Behind the sofa on the window sill was a medium-size snakeplant in a very large California pottery pot in merging blending shades of green. It had not been watered in some time, and someone had dropped a curling of cigarette ash in it. There were curtains of red, green and black geometric design on a grey ground that wouldn't show the dirt which were drawn as if for night. Spread across the slipcovered sofa, of a shade of green that wouldn't show the dirt either, and partly under and around it too, was a deck of canasta cards. A very small chubby boy, wearing only a tee-shirt and a diaper which had sagged to the bottom of his clear plastic pants, stood unsteadily near the sofa holding upside down a bottle in which was left about an inch of milk. Another child, a boy too, somewhat older, holding upside down a slice of peanut-buttered bread, sat cross-legged on the floor in front of a very loud television. "For Chrissakes, turn that damn thing down," said the girl.

Ann paid the man her bill, and when she brushed his hand she felt as if her hand had brushed with death. She set her purse beside her on the seat. Her hands gripped splintered wood. The wheels slipped wild. Out of control. Afraid, afraid.

There was a significance to it all if only she could grasp it, but it kept eluding her. Fragments of vision scrambled to be born, coalesced struggling into a hideous outline too shadowy to interpret, and refused to break up again into the scraps of which they were composed and float away. It was a kind of debris collecting in her mind, stubborn, ugly, like the detergent scum they talked about upon the waterways. She felt herself adrift in a despair possessing neither word nor form. There seemed to be a falling away of scales. She

thought no longer with the surfaces of her mind, but only with something that took its range and focused far beneath. Where before people had moved in parade tableau before her, she was possessed now with the mysteriousness of lives. She read, like a diplomat studying the dispatches of an unfriendly power, between the lines only, and everything seemed to her to have become a sinister secret unfolding.

She continued right past the old road turning— past the high cliff bank with its three tall pines reaching up above the rest, overseeing the six snake lines of traffic, three going this way, three going that— descended down North Central Avenue into the flat again, smokefogged, and felt as if she weren't herself at all. Something that wasn't consciousness had rejected for her the normal old road way, and now consciousness swept in to fill the void, manufacturing reasons, officiously fabricating catwalks of logic where she would have preferred to be not thinking at all.

Much neater coming round this way. Can see where you are going for a change. A miracle there hasn't been a head-on wreck with all those corkscrew turns and hanging trees. And something to look at here, at least. She briskly filed away in her mind a planting of bulbs on one of the road-fronting lawns of Valley Heights that she meant to try next year around the corner on her own front lawn in Arden Farms.

And down in the place where she wouldn't let herself think at all there loomed this thing in the road. And her alert and busy awareness picked at it finicking— come now, what thing? — and turned its back.

She made her right turn into Arden Farms Lane and was amazed at the unchanged scene— the same familiar gradual rise of ground, the houses secure tucked in the hill, moored each by each in the sheltering coves of their own curving driveways. And yet there was about the whole a bathing of perspective in a cold north light, some aspect of a gaunt grey morning after, the lights and glitter gone, the bare bones of stage showing, the fleshing of an inner luster starved away. The pits of her eyes felt drawn way back, dry as charred cinders. So much seemed to have happened; she seemed to have lived this morning a lifetime of experience. The outline of the street seemed to have shrunk, to be somehow not whole, wide-vaulted, but a shadow of a mirrored fragment world— as if a pestilence had passed and left the outer shell of a familiar scene . . .

Barbara Orne in jeans, out working on her pear tree espalier, had not as much dimension as a marionette. She began to wave her pruning shears energetically, motioning for Ann to stop, and looked more improbable than ever.

"Say, I only wanted to ask you— Did you by any chance stop over to Kastner's and look at that material?"

A flimsy reason to have stopped her on her way. She felt Barbara's deep grey eyes upon her probing. Barbara's skin was fine, so fine with its soft peach glow around the cheeks. You couldn't make out the graining. Like tissue silk. Not a pore on it anywhere. "What material?" Ann said coldly.

"Oh say— I thought everyone— I thought you knew— they're supposed to be having this fantastic—"

"No, I've only been to the garage and back," said Ann.

"Oh, are you having trouble?"

Out of the jumbled cone of her awareness, Ann wondered just how much Barbara knew. But of course they all must know. Must all have taken it all in, each curious pair of eyes in every peering house clear up around the curving arm of hill down through her windows in the cul-de-sac. Everyone seeing, everyone knowing, everyone but her, until this morning, when it all came plain.



She wished she could shake loose that nonsense, surface out of it, break clean at last of the water into fresh blue air after her long dive.

She hadn't. It was definite as that. What old and knowing flapping crow would sag there like spread canvas becalmed pure waiting to be run over?

And then it wouldn't any of it be true.

"No, just my window stuck. They got it fixed," said Ann and started up her motor once again.

She lived a curious undream now, an opposite existence to the dream she had enjoyed in the brief rosy delirium of the years before she'd met and married Otis. Something invisible whipped her on as it had then, but now through a murk of masks and eerie rites, a scene over which a dank black net had fallen in which she grappled for her way. It was the springing up, as at a scorpion touch, of an evil within her to meet an evil without. It was a falling of an unreality so real— but all the while something in her watched another something ticking steady, rational, sober, waiting for the touch of the tangible event that would sweep it all away.

The time before the crow stretched back long paths. The time before the crow was like the blooming of the Christmas cactus which hadn't bloomed at Christmas, or Thanksgiving, or at Easter either, or at any other appropriate time, but at some wholly nondescript season apropos of nothing at all. But the flower, bugle-shaped, as long as from her finger's middle joint down to its end, had been of a shade of rose so magnificent, imagination was too small to hold it afterwards. It was a lost Eden of color. The image that remained to her was only an echo of the glory. Only the echo of the echo, and the knowledge that there once had been a thing which had occasioned it. And that was how the time before the crow seemed to her now.

Carol was cutting across the front lawn as Ann parked, running up the driveway to waylay her. Carol with her whitewashed face and skinny shanks and violet eyes. Carol and the crow. The crow and Carol.

And Carol's husband travelled.

Would Otis mind. There was no water. The kitchen sink. That couldn't wait for Walter, the plumber'd have to come. But just before she went ahead and made the call, would Otis mind. When he came home. Oh, don't disturb his dinner, after dinner would be time enough.

A night turned unseasonably cold. And Walter out of town. And Carol on the telephone. Otis had taken up his green metal tool chest from the basement and put on his old army ski parka and let himself out the front door, admitting a flat wedge of wind which sliced across the hall into the living room and curled itself around her ankles, and she had gone to the door to test if it was closed because just the slightest crack was enough in weather like this. And it was.

And it had seemed later to be a happy idea, a project to enliven the prosaic, to make up a pot of coffee and take it on over along with the half a cake remaining from dessert. It was a thought for whose sunshine she felt she merited an accolade. She knotted a kerchief round her hair against the wind, enjoying the framed picture of the girl reflected in the gilt rococo mirror over the sofa, a girl with ardor still (in her mind's eye, despite the navy blue square that held it round, she saw her hair sweeping cleanly back in a fresh bright breeze), a girl with flair, adept at the sort of husbandry that converts with sleight-of-hand to a delicious and nourishing repast the meager potato parings of life.

It was no night to be without a furnace.

And it had been a proceeding of the most painstaking complexity, maneuvering the cake plate with the aluminum top that kept sliding, and the hot electric percolator full out past the door that blew hard against her, out into the night and down the two terraced front steps whose outlines merged in the dark into the front walk. And next door's Sylvia began to bark her foolish high-pitched wheep, wheep, wheep, and Ann had smiled as she always did, because what absurd kind of bleating sound was that for a beast the size of Sylvia to make.

The green of the lawn and of the periwinkle beside the door was richer, more living in the halfmoonlight than it had been before in the hard gloss of the afternoon. Tight grey cloud flakes scudded across the sky making the moon look as if it rippled under water. Weyman's great black locust that he called a weed tree and kept threatening to cut down, and it was sacrilege because it was so old and tall and gave such splendid shade, pointed witchfingers down over the sidewalk. And up the corner over by the mailbox there was the Hall's new gas lamp, like a ghost madonna walking in the whirling night.

And had she seen it then or had she not— what was it she had seen through Carol's wide picture window set diagonal to the curving street? What was happening there in Carol's house obscured by the ripple of white gauze curtain and the large willow dipping and swaying, already full-leafed out, long green hair swept graceful sideways, over and down in the wild wind? Had it been or had it not? — past the tree and past the curtain, behind the glass in the room's warm glow, two separate shapes all divergent points and joints and angles, then one hulking pyramid shape, dark, looming, round, no angles anywhere at all— two shapes becoming one.

She had turned from it abruptly and come home, all initiative for her enterprise seeping from her, suctioned off at once as if a plug had been pulled out, not knowing whether what she saw or thought she saw, or what it seemed to her was there existed there or not, knowing only that it was all a dreadful mistake, all some other person's life and not her own.

Couldn't have been. She ought to have gone back— turned round and set right off again. The only sensible, rational thing. And she had put the cake in the freezer. And poured the coffee down the sink. And folded the kerchief back inside her dresser. Had she seen what she had seen or had she not?

And she had sat down with her book again, and it had felt all slippery and heavy in her hands. She herself had felt all light and feathery. As if she stood high on a ledge, her elbows angled out like wings, and the arms of her chair were two stiff scoops of air on which she leaned and which floated her up, up, across and away. By the time Otis came home from Carol's, she knew it hadn't any of it been true.

And if not for the crow, it wouldn't have been. Go back, go back. Even now, and see. Though something in her knew with a certitude she had never run down that crow in the first place. For why should a smirking hooligan of a bird just dangle there, loiter drifting in mid-air, for the express purpose of being cut down by her Ford, hurtling along the old road at a breakneck speed of maybe ten miles an hour?

"I never can do anything for any of Carol's complications," said Otis into his paper when Ann came in after the dishes. "I don't know what she expects. I just don't have the tools." He was moody, having failed at the sink.

He was a splendid looking man still, still not grey, still making an impression of length and leanness despite the on-the-whole losing battle he waged constantly with his weight. Ann felt herself go empty with needing Otis. The outside edges of her curled around and over and caved into the void she felt beginning down through the middle of

her, a void that permeated and widened out like water through a blotter. The leggy, vivacious, coping girl-mother who has gained his admiration went out as the void kept spreading, went out completely like day when the dark takes over. That particular girl was smithereened to a million pieces, all the starch of her just motes now in all the corners for the next day's dusting. The uprightness had sifted out of her knees, and she plopped into Otis's lap feeling Brobdingnagian, like a monster child, sensing his stiffening of surprise.

Otis was smiling with embarrassment; he seemed not able to make up his mind was he pleased or was he ill at ease. If only she hadn't, if only she hadn't, if only she hadn't run down that crow.

In the fireplace, a log fretted to lace exploded in a firework of sparks.

"Oh Otis," Ann said into his shoulder. "Oh Otis, Otis, Otis."

Otis folded his paper halfway down with one hand and balanced it, leaving the crease on top, against the side of his chair. With the other hand he reached around and patted her, in a flutter of small awkward pats, clumsily on the shoulder. "Sh—" he said. "Do you hear what I hear?"

Ann lifted up her head. "I know—" she began to laugh. It was the peepers, their blind newborn chorus coming clear and unmistakable from the swamps down by the field.

"We've made it! Done it again, by God! Listen to them go. We've made it— made it through another winter!" Otis was triumphant. Every year he celebrated the peepers, and with each increment of jubilation to the accumulated layers of annual past ceremony, the significance of the event grew in his mind. The hearing of the first peepers was his rite of spring. What had begun their first year in the house as the comment of a moment had by now become the platform for an evening's commentary. They went to bed, Otis still remarking and remarking over the peepers.

When Ann awoke suddenly, lying on her back, she knew at once it was very late but not yet morning. Her awareness was immediate— it sat there on her chest like a cat landed on its fours— as ready as if she had never been asleep. The room was black. The peepers were quiet. The night that had been opaque with sound was now so translucently still that the silence seemed to distill itself in a hiss around her ears, like the reflected gleam from off a hard crystal thing.

She got out of bed, meticulously flattening her side of the blankets back down against the sheet so that no cold air would be admitted to disturb Otis. She walked across the carpeted house and let herself out the front door. It was so very still; the wind was still; everything seemed held taut, frozen upward in prayer. It was black dark night, but a transparent greyness, as of introspection, was spread like a lowered inner lid over all, and the stars themselves seemed shrunken and lost in thought.

It was intensely cold. The cold burned the soles of her feet. Otis's Volkswagen, which was newer, had been accorded the honor of the garage. The station wagon was at the curb. She walked out into the street and crouched in front of the radiator grille, tucking her nightgown underneath her feet. But the light was maddeningly shadowed. She pressed her cheek against the cold metal, then felt over her face, then touched with her hand, slowly and methodically, each honeycomb of the grille. All was surgically pure and cold. She brushed her hair out of the way and blotted her cheek again against the grille and then felt delicately with her fingertips along her face, but it was as before, no trace of stickiness, nothing there to trap her fingers or to interrupt the glacial smoothness of her skin.



"Oh God," she said, "Oh God," and realized she had said it aloud and clapped her hand across her mouth. She tried to stand but something held her down; she discovered her nightgown caught beneath her toes and clumsily freed herself, skinning her elbow against the hood.

Her feet were a torment. She padded up to the Weyman's, holding her hands flat against the flair of her nightgown. She knelt down by the right front wheel of Dina's car which was the side away from the curb, groped around for the valve and let the air out of the tire. Then she let the air out of the right back tire. Charlie's car was in the driveway. She looked at Charlie's car and then back down the street. A picture grew in her mind. She decided she would not bother with cars in driveways.

She let the air out of the right front and right rear tires of the two Reid cars, both of which were parked in the street. The Graham's cost her a pang. Jim's Buick was in the driveway. Martha's Mustang, presumably, was in the garage. Of all the luck, it was Henry's little yellow-painted MG that he worked so hard on every weekend and after school that had to be at the curb. But a rule was a rule. Henry's car was parked in the street and had to go. She knelt and lovingly let the air out of its right front and right rear tires.

Paula Zimmer's sister was visiting from Ohio. Apparently to the guest had been ceded the garage. Both Zimmer cars were in the street, and Ann let the air out of both sets of right front and right rear tires. The McChesney's single car was in the garage. Ann regarded the wide gap along the curb with regret. It would be the one flaw in her composition, an unavoidable jolt to the eye rather than the masterful, but gentle and persuasive sweep of led perspective which had been her vision.

Only the Schenks now, and she could take her anguished feet indoors. The Garlands and the Schenks shared the bottom of the cul-de-sac. After the Schenks the street started up again the other side, but with the other side she was not tonight to be concerned. She skipped her own house and let the air out of the right front and right rear tires of Shep Schenk's car, which was the only one of their two parked at the curb. Then she surveyed up the street and underwent an attack of conscience over the favoritism shown her own car, equally culpable, which had been spared through unfair privilege the fate of Henry Graham's. Its uprightness, moreover, constituted a glaring lapse in the symmetry, which even more than the gap at the McChesneys marred the composition of the whole. She tramped back, though she was very tired and very cold and her feet were almost refusing to bend, and let the air out of the right front and right rear tires of her own station wagon.

While squatting at the rear tire listening to the air hiss out, she noticed that Otis had neglected once again, as he almost invariably did, to close the garage. She went up the slope of their front lawn, and sopping as it was, her feet felt marvelous off the cold pavement and on the grass. She went into the garage and let the air out of Otis's right front and right rear tires. The thought of Carol's and Walter's cars occurred to her—recurred—they had been occurring during the entire project—but they were way up the street near the corner, and her feet simply would not cope.

She stood at the top of the hill at the entrance to the garage and inspected the street. The listing automobiles had the studied look of stiffly intense dignity adhering to those who struggle to retain equilibrium in the aftermath of a liquidly uproarious misspent night. "I don't want to do this," Ann said. "I like elegance and graces, and crises that are confronted with dignity in rooms."

The street had now a decidedly raffish and disreputable air. It was possible—Ann could conceive—a row of garbage cans—at least three in each driveway, their overflowing

contents spilling from uniformly quasi-shut lids; and among them dogs would range, dogs large and silent, staring boldly at people and fiercely guarding the trash from one another.

She walked along the side of the house, making a circle around the clammy juniper under their bedroom window that grabbed for her nightgown, holding her hem up high to keep it from dragging in the dew. She was so cold it hardly seemed to matter any more. Tomorrow she would defrost some of the hamburger in the freezer, and in the night she would soak it in Drano and put it out under the black locust in the McChesney's front yard. And wear a bathrobe. And shoes.

She opened the front door, taking a long and deliberate time in doing it, leaning against it in slow stages of infinitesimally increasing force, so that it would not snap ajar and wake Otis or cause Sylvia to bark. The house roared its quiet about her. She was shivering uncontrollably as she slipped back into bed. Luckily Otis was sleeping on his side turned so that he faced her, and she was able to creep between his arms, struggling a little with the inert weight of his upper arm.

Otis was very accommodating and held her very close around. She shivered gratefully against him and tried to batten down her heart, which pounded excruciatingly in anticipation of the excitement of the morning and of the morning after that. The Schenks next door let their Sylvia out very early; so was Captain, the English setter from up the other circle let out early in the morning, and the Smith's Ajax, and the Weyman's Heidi. Ann often saw them from her window around sevenish or so, when she had her coffee just before time to wake Otis. She speculated for a while over which of the dogs would reach her poisoned meat first before she allowed herself to fall back to sleep.



## *The East Lake Plurality*

Perhaps the East Lake Plurality will lose  
and we'll not return to that shiny school  
they wish us to advance so far beyond  
our small buildings are yet simple  
history of this town they want to pave  
and smarten up the landscape  
is the question that they've levelled all  
a renewal of what  
and since they have it's new  
but not re-new to us who made it first

And if they win we lose it's sure  
our town will be forgotten before they do  
it over our consent in these affairs  
since if they lose perhaps we may not win  
when after all it's gone so who will question  
who renews what the question is  
that they want to re-do the sidewalks  
and my God that's where we grew up

*—John C. Wilcox*

## *One From the Wars*

Crack, the smell of burning leaves  
Startled, a bird lifts his body  
to another tree sleeps again.  
In death you laughed once, then groaned  
as the darkness of your veins flowed  
into the darkness of the rice water.  
Your body moves now by the wind.  
Insects fight for your flesh  
lose to the rain, devour another then die.  
Sisyphus and soldiers in the mud.

—Charles Hornstein



---

## *THE BETRAYED*

Benjamin our last (first and  
always) born  
sold into (Father forgive us who  
know not the meaning of) Egypt (life)  
And Maury was our brother who  
silently (we closed our minds  
and slept) loved the pasture  
even after we had traded it  
for one worthless education  
in death learning nothing but  
how to hate life enough  
to slide dirty-pantsed down  
the apple tree and escape the fire  
which Benjamin did not.

The last (first and always) born  
delivered into hell and knew not  
the memory of a green pasture turned  
hard but understood the loss  
of nothing while (how desperately)  
flames were still a figment  
of sleep

—Linda Erlanger

## *The Consolation of Philosophy*

—Carolyn Banks

The front door faced the alley, which was called Service Way, steep, with yellow bricks that looked waxed, the way the kitchen floor did before her mother covered it with newspapers to keep it clean. The church was half a block away, and on Saturday mornings she would awaken to a sober chant, overlaced with scrapes and scratches. It was a recording, broadcast weekly from the church tower, where the bells used to be, long ago. She had never heard the bells. And on Saturday night, in Freddie's Bar, again a half block, but in another direction, the juke box countered with "Peg O' My Heart" over and over, until she fell asleep. She used to wish that the jukebox would start in the morning and the church music would start at night. That seemed better. Did people really die when the sun was shining?

She went to Catholic school. She would go to school early, earlier than everyone else, because her mother worked. She would sit way up high on the vestibule stairs and watch everyone come in. She would listen to them talk and come down when someone that she knew came to school.

Sometimes in the morning she would see Mrs. Kendricks hanging the wash. Her mother always did it after supper on Tuesdays. Didn't Mrs. Kendricks' hands get cold, shaking out the wet things so early in the morning? Mrs. Kendricks always said, "Hello, Janet. Sure wish I had your energy." Once, on a Saturday, Mrs. Kendricks saw Janet with her mother at the butcher shop. Mrs. Kendricks told Janet's mother, "Sure wish I had her energy." She always thought of Mrs. Kendricks on Tuesday nights when the smell of bleach and ammonia filled the house. She hated the smell of Tuesday nights.

On the way home from school it took much longer, because she wasn't by herself. The girls would walk slowly, elbowing each other off the sidewalk, laughing, usually. They all carried their books the same way, breast-high, supported by both arms folded. And if a new name appeared on the placard, they would stop at Hessinger's Funeral Home, kneel solemnly and pray, and sign false names in the Visitor's Book. She always got dizzy with the smell of too many flowers.

School seemed never to last very long, even though every day was the same. Except holidays; they were longer. On holidays they got cards, Christmas cards, Mayday cards, and cards on special saints' days. On holidays they drew pictures and colored them and pasted things on the windows and blackboards. Sometimes they cleaned the room, shining their desks with a red polish that made everything smell like something to do with cars and machines and new rubber boots. Today was Saint Valentine's Day.

In the front of the classroom was a cardboard box pasted over with tissue and red paper hearts. That was where they put their cards. And Sister would call the names and

they would make neat little stacks on their desks. Everyone thought Sister Sylvia was meaner than the other nuns and were sorry that they were in Sister Sylvia's room. But Janet thought she just seemed meaner because her nose was pointed and her hands moved faster than the other nuns' hands moved. When Sister handed out the cards everyone would move around and whisper to each other. Sometimes Sister would call a name twice, and she didn't even pay attention to the noise. But today when Sister asked who Nancy Climer was, Janet was afraid because Sister's face was red. And Janet felt hot and dizzy when she told Sister that she was Nancy Climer, or that she had told Tommy Tireski that she was, that Nancy Climer was her real name. And Sister looked at her a long time before she took the ruler out of her desk. Janet could tell that Sister thought someone else must have done it, because Janet never talked during lessons or prayers. When Janet walked up the aisle to where Sister was the room was quiet, like the funeral home. But before she got back to her seat the moving and talking started again.

And Janet looked out at the street where last month at noon-time the whole class saw a brown dog dead in the street. His insides were coming out and his blood was very red. At home she sat in the big chair twisting her hair with her fingers and her dad said, "What's wrong, baby?" and she said "Nothing." And he asked her again and she told him, crying too much, he said. And then he told her it must have been a bad dog to die that way.

## *ADAM:*

"you        who were once    bone in me  
              who with fruit    began my fermenting:

you taught me to dance  
to grip your ribs,  
and hold you arching backwards.  
I learned to bend  
to balance your weight,  
shifting my center of gravity  
to include you."

*—Edward S. Gold*

## *Hommage à Dietrich Buxtehude*

There is in ancient music peace;  
Beyond, the fragments of a world.

The sea returns  
    against the sand in wavewake  
    murmuring;  
Along the low strand  
Tide mark, out to the far thrown jetty,  
The night brings driftwood,  
    remnants of a flood  
Distant from here, salt grey, to be rendered smooth  
And featureless in time.

The sea reflects  
    itself at dawn, an image  
    of the sky.  
Along the still, cold  
Edge of land I walk, hearing my steps  
Measure the movement  
    and hear nothing else.  
I stare out into the growing light and see  
The sun and see no thing.

—Robert S. Zelenka

---

## DEOR

TRANSLATED FROM THE ANGLO-SAXON BY PATRICK W. CONNER

*The poem "Deor" was written some time during the first part of the Tenth Century.*

*Central to the poem is the idea of endurance: The agony of present existence will be transformed into triumph. We shall overcome.*

*The poet builds his world from fragments of the past. Welund, an early Scandinavian warrior, was imprisoned and persecuted by the evil king Nithad. Welund survived his torment and lived to avenge himself on his persecutor. Beadohilda, the daughter of Nithad, was raped by Welund as part of his revenge. Her child, unnamed in the poem, was the hero Widia. Mathilda, a young bride, was fated to drown on her wedding night. A water demon drew her down into a river, but her husband, Gaute, cast a spell with the music of his harp, and saved her from death.*

*Theodric, in exile for thirty years, at last returns to his homeland. Ermanaricus, an evil being, is overthrown.*

*The poet, Deor, turning to his own life, tells of his displacement from the court of his lord, whom he still loves. His poem is an affirmation of hope in the future: thaes ofereade; thisses swa maeg. in the past has misfortune turned to good; so in the future will things again be well.*

Welund was racked	in the worm's torment:
that strong-minded man	who had met hate;
whose company was called	Care and Sorrow,
Midwinter Misery,	and Morbid Woe
since Nithad lay	him numb in irons,
fast with fetters	was the fighter.
That solved itself;	and so shall this.

---

---

Beadohilda  
at her brother's death  
even though she thought  
She probably knew  
but never guessed  
That solved itself;

Mathilda's moanings,  
were mercilessly many  
that of distressing love  
That solved itself;

Theodric was enthroned  
at the Visgoth town.  
That solved itself;

Learn we by asking  
and his wolfish ways:  
of the Ostragoth land;  
They say many sat

was not heavily hurt—  
was not desperate—  
that this was it.  
that she was pregnant  
what good she gained.  
and so shall this.

we may mention,  
from the Geat's maiden  
they were from sleep distracted.  
and so shall this.

thirty winters  
It was told many times.  
and so shall this.

of Ermanaricus  
so wielded he over folk  
he was a loathful king.  
bound in sorrows

---

---

woefully waiting—

that this king

That solved itself;

wishing always—

would be overcome and killed.

and so shall this.

The sorrowful one sits,

thinks in his heavy-heart

of how endless are

and sinks into worry

so wide a God

to show many men

and some wonderful joy,

separated from joy,

his hidden thoughts

earthly troubles,

how around the world

always is working

magnificent honor,

while others get woe.

And I, myself,

I played a period

who was called Deor

For many winters I filled

for my gracious lord

to a lay-skilled man

first granted to me

That solved itself;

will have to say

Heodeninga's poet,

by that dear master.

my office faithfully

until Heorrenda grew

and took lands and lauds

by my lord and master.

and so shall this.

---

---



I have come  
and gone  
having receded like flowers or ice  
and so on.  
Perhaps the day was too short anyway.  
You do remember  
the mango tree  
with those old snapshots  
pinned to the underside of the leaves.  
Though the figures are quite old  
the color is still light.  
There lies the fault for me  
for us  
in the permanency of this affair  
in the repetition of the leaves  
the photographs  
the expectancies  
and so on  
and so on.

*—Joel Arsenault*



**Prose Award:**

*Beatrice Greene*, THE CROW



**Poetry Award:**

*Linda Erlanger*, FALLEN RAFTERS

**Honorable Mentions:**

*Primus St. John*, ALL THE WAY HOME

*Robert S. Zelenka*,  
HOMMAGE `A DIETRICH BUXTEHUDE



